

Here's how I tend to think about policy reform to allow greater compactness in high-accessibility areas.

1. It's a necessary (though not sufficient) condition to meet goals that we've already set for ourselves.

A. Carbon neutrality

- Cities are (relatively) low carbon zones. Keeping people out with exclusionary zoning tools forces them into [higher carbon zones](#).

B. Affordability

- When new housing is constrained, the existing housing stock becomes increasingly unaffordable. Conversely, new construction can [improve affordability](#). The affordability impacts of new construction in high-accessibility areas stem both from the supply effect and from [transportation cost savings](#) from living close to one's work and nonwork destinations. (Transportation is the second item in household budgets after housing). See also: Been, Vicki, Ingrid Gould Ellen, and Katherine O'Regan. "Supply skepticism: Housing supply and affordability." Housing Policy Debate 29, no. 1 (2019): 25-40.

C. Vision Zero/Traffic Danger

- The United States has the most dangerous transportation system of [all our peer countries](#). The added danger we face stems from a combination of road designs that are unsafe, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists, and the fact that we drive 2-3 times as much as many peer countries, exposing us to further danger. Exclusionary land-use regulations exacerbate this problem by forcing people into driving-intensive lifestyles.

D. Overcoming Racial Exclusion

- Single-family zoning was born out of an explicit desire for [racial exclusion](#) and continues to exacerbate segregation to this day. See: Rothwell, Jonathan T., and Douglas S. Massey. "The Effect of Density Zoning on Racial Segregation in U.S. Urban Areas." Urban Affairs Review 44, no. 6 (July 2009): 779–806.

E. Fiscal soundness

- Sprawl is subsidized. [Compact development pays the bills](#).

2. It can be done in a way that [supports neighborhood vibrancy](#), quality of life, and accessibility.